

Cedar Bridge Tavern
Cedar Bridge, Union Township
Ocean County, New Jersey

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District of New Jersey

Historic American Buildings Survey
Seymour Williams, F.A.I.A. District Officer
133 Central Avenue, Rahway, New Jersey

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Cedar Bridge Tavern
Cedar Bridge, Union Township
Ocean County, New Jersey

Owner: The Penn Producing Company

Date of Erection: Circa 1775-1799

Architect:

Builder: John Middleton Jr.

Present Condition: Original

Number of Stories: Two, with cellar and garret

Materials of Construction: Foundation - stone
masonry

Exterior walls - timber
frame clapboarded

Interior walls - board
partitions

Chimneys - brick, built
into inside of gable ends

Roof - gable, wood
shingled

Historical Data:

By a deed of 4 December 1712 Jonathan Fox of Great Britain conveyed to Thomas and William Fox 1/15 part of a propriety of land to be laid out in the 3rd or 4th tenths (Burlington or Gloucester Counties) in West New Jersey. A warrant of 5 August 1743 for locating 333 $\frac{1}{2}$ acres of this land was issued by the Council of Proprietors, being the unsurveyed half of the 1/15 propriety. By a deed of 8 October in that year, Jonathan Fox and Thomas Fox (said

William Fox being deceased) conveyed to John Monrow (all the parties being then of New Hanover Township, Burlington County) 233 1/3 acres of that unsurveyed land, "with all the mines, minerals, woods," etc. (a) This is the only deed on record which may apply to the property here considered. The latter lay in that part of Monmouth County transferred from East Jersey to West Jersey by the revised angle of the line of separation as agreed upon in 1743, the year in which this Cedar Bridge tract was deeded as above stated. But the original Province line of 1687 remained as the division between Monmouth and Burlington Counties; hence the description of the Cedar Bridge tract as lying in "the angle between East and West Jersey in Monmouth County".

The tavern here considered is located on the south side of County Road No. 2 just east of the Oswego or East River at the village of Cedar Bridge, in the west end of Union Township near the line of Burlington County. This township was created in 1846 from Dover and Stafford, and was included in the part of Monmouth County which was set off in 1850 as Ocean County. The village derives its names from that of the tavern property as appears hereafter. The map of New Jersey drawn from a survey of 1769 and published by William Faden in London 1777, showing highways and settlements of that time bears no indication of Cedar Bridge nor of any road in that vicinity.

From a subsequent deed transferring this Cedar Bridge tract, it appears that by a conveyance not found on record, this property had passed from John Monrow (to whom it had been surveyed 17 Oct. 1743) to Thomas Foulkes (for whom it was resurveyed 20 Nov. 1766 and later to John Middleton of Nottingham Township,

Burlington County (b). For the latter, in his will of 16 September 1799, devises to his son Joel Middletown "Sedor" Bridge, the farm and improvements, during his lifetime, and orders the same to be sold afterwards by the executors. From this evidence and from our survey of the tavern itself, the date of erection of that building is estimated as between 1761-1799. Accordingly, by deed of 10 May 1813, John M. Cook, executor of the will of this John Middleton of Nottingham, conveyed to Isaiah Heisler for \$1149.30 the tract of 101 acres "called the Cedar Bridge tract", in the angle between East and West Jersey in Monmouth County, and a $1\frac{1}{2}$ acre mill tract at Cedar Bridge adjacent on the west line thereof, reciting the original survey to John Monrow abovenamed of 17 Oct. 1743. Joel Middleton the devisee of the lifetime possession of this estate as stated, gave a quitclaim deed of 23 Feb. 1816 to Heisler for "all that tract of land commonly called Cedar Bridge "being then in the actual possession of the latter.

Isaiah Heisler with wife Sarah conveyed the two abovesaid tracts of land "known as Cedar Bridge", by deed of 5 April 1816 to Jacob Egbert and Thomas R. Howell, and these two in turn passed it by deed of sale on 27 April 1816 to Jacob Heisler and Aaron Johnson who had the land resurveyed as 172.36 acres. Heisler having become financially embarrassed, conveyed all his real estate to Thomas Swain and William Kensinger for the benefit of his creditors, and these trustees conveyed the same to Joseph Johnson, who thus became tenant in common with Aaron Johnson abovenamed, "with all and singular the buildings". These two owners, residing

(b) Other land in this vicinity was conveyed between these parties, as appears in a recorded deed of 2 Nov. 1761, for $18\frac{1}{2}$ acres of cedar swamp on Bever Dam Brook, a branch of Ancocus Creek in Monmouth County, between the lines run for a division of East from West Jersey. (Bk. U - p. 371)

in Burlington Township and County, by deed of 10 January 1830 conveyed the same property to William C. Budd of Mt. Holly, in that County, reciting the title from John Middleton as outlined above. Elizabeth Budd and Edwin M. Budd, administrators of the estate of William C. Budd late of Mt. Holly decd., passed title to Moses Headly, Samuel Rogers, and Thomas Cathcart, all of Stafford Township, Monmouth County, by deed of 25 March 1836, and these three grantees in turn passed it to John Wildermuth of the same place by their deed of 8 April 1836, for \$750, but in foreclosure proceedings against him, the property was seized by the sheriff and sold to Miller Howard of New Hanover Township, Burlington Co. by Deed of 17 March 1856 for \$51.00, the tract being described as 172.36 acres. Howard and his wife Elizabeth, conveyed the same to Mary H. Woodward, wife of Edward B. Woodward, of Plumstead Township, Ocean County, by deed of 17 November 1857, for \$2000 still describing it as the "tract of land known as Cedar Bridge" in Ocean County.

Mary H. Woodward, the grantee last named, being of Upper Freehold Township, Monmouth County, gave deed of 13 December 1919 conveying the same to Joseph H. Woodward of the same place, and he in turn passed a 1/5 interest therein to Frederick L. Moore of Brooklyn, New York, by deed of 9 January 1920 for \$1000. On 15 May 1926, Woodward, then of Plumstead Township, Ocean County, and Moore, being of New York City, gave deed conveying the entire tract to the Penn Producing Company of Barnegat, New Jersey, the present owners 1939. In this last deed for the "land known as the Cedar Bridge tract" in Union Township, Ocean County, New Jersey, it is described as being located near the head of the east branch of Wading River, on both sides of "the old straight road to Barnegat" (County Road No. 2), and as containing 199.46 acres, "being the outside bounds of three adjoining original surveys - one made for John Monrow 17 October 1743 the second made for Thomas Foulkes 20 November 1766, and the third made for Joseph H. Woodward 14 October 1892".

Architectural Analysis:

This remarkable public house constructed of timber frame in two stories with cellar under the original part only and an unfinished garret under the gable roof is fortunately preserved in almost unaltered condition. As shown on the drawings, the original unit comprised the western two-thirds of the house, the floor plan having the public room across the north front, behind which a parlor or private dining room in the southeast corner and the kitchen on the southwest one, the board partition between which two rooms has since been removed. The abutting corner fireplaces in the first and last mentioned rooms have very plain wood mantels with bracketted shelf, and as in all the rooms in the two stories, a chair-rail in addition to the baseboard. Remarkable is the limitation of moldings to the bead in all finishing woodwork of the interior. The twelve foot extension of the house eastward was made very soon (as the identity of the details indicate) providing a new parlor and kitchen on the first floor and two additional bedrooms on the second, and greatly improving the proportions of the mass of the house.

Across the highway from the tavern stands the remains of the unusual building, a combination of stable, bowling alley and dance hall. Since the photograph was taken and later the survey and drawings made, this building has been destroyed by storm. Between it and the river westward were observed the remains of the up-and-down saw of the mill, evidently the same mill mentioned in the deed of 10 May 1813 cited on page 3 hereof.

Bibliography:

A search of title in land and probate records of Monmouth and Ocean Counties and of the Secretary of West ^{New} Jersey by Oscar F. Benjamin, H.A.B.S. abstractor

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Approved:

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